

# MOCII - The Failed Voyage of the Borealis

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Category: Half-Life, Portal  
Genre: Adventure, Hurt-Comfort  
Language: English  
Status: In-Progress  
Published: 2014-08-09 00:48:02  
Updated: 2015-10-06 01:05:13  
Packaged: 2016-04-26 21:28:52  
Rating: T  
Chapters: 5  
Words: 14,685  
Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

Summary: Sequel to 'The Misadventures of Caroline II'. When a Floppy Disk containing a challenge and information about the Borealis comes into GLaDOS' possession, she's willing to cross the sea to find out who dared challenge her. Caroline II is of course dragged along for the ride. But there's more to the Borealis than meets the eye - was its initial disappearance really an accident...?

## 1. Introduction

Hey guys, and welcome...

Welcome to **\*\*THE SEQUEL!** \*\*For those who are new here, clicky my name and go and read 'The Misadventures of Caroline II', my main Portal story - otherwise this will make no sense to you. For those of you returning from there, WELCOME BACK! And, hopefully enjoy!

This is actually very different from the first idea I had, so bare with it! :D

~Lagiocrus

\* \* \*

><p>He was dead.<p>

She stared at him with her arms crossed from the other end of the car park, her back leaning against the panelled walls of the Enrichment Centre. She performed every scan she knew how to - she checked for vitals, none were detected. She scanned for heat signatures; the body was stone cold, several hours old by now. Whoever did this to him, they had come during the darkness of night and done the deed then. Running an autopsy scan, she traced all of his external wounds, observing the damage from afar, before deciding that his death had not been because of the wounds being inflicted but because of the bleeding out he did afterwards. He had potentially lived for another hour before dying where he lay - or rather, hung.

She finally gathered up the courage to walk the length of the car park and to the entrance gates, where he hung from a loose steel beam that at one point had made the security fence. Blood dripped from every crevice, staining the black tarmac crimson red. She examined the wounds more closely upon her approach " the wounds were deep gashes, inflicted by a Western-style Santoku knife, a common kitchen utensil. The only reason she knew that at all was because she had once used a similar weapon on a human and recognized the shape and density of the wounds.

"Well," She grumbled to herself. "One thing I can say is that the Imbecile will not like this."

Without giving the poor man even a second thought, GLaDOS turned around and strutted back to the facility, leaving Eric hanging there like a Christmas decoration.

\* \* \*

><p>Her original aim had been to not even inform Caroline II that somebody had viciously murdered the annoying human male, however after she found the body, she soon started to find evidence that pointed to the murderer's identity " notably, her very own Santoku knife was soaking in the kitchen sink, stained with blood. This, of course, led her to two conclusions " one; she was somehow the murderer but for some reason had no recollection of it. Two; somebody had stolen her knife and committed the act, in an attempt to frame her and turn everyone against her. The last thing she needed was being murdered again over this. While the second was the most likely to be the case, trying to come up with how to convince the humans of this was another story. For the first time in her lengthy existence, she regretted having a reputation as a compulsive liar.<p>

When she picked up the knife from the sink to examine it for fingerprints, she heard the familiar gait of Caroline II walking into the cafeteria.

"Hey, GLaDOS!" She announced her arrival with her booming voice, which sounded more like a warning bell to the android at that moment. Hastily she shoved the knife back into the sink, turning around to glare at the troublesome girl" \_woman \_with wide eyes.

"You completed those tests too quickly. I didn't even feel it."

"You say that every time, but you just don't want to admit that I'm better than any test you can come up with." She spoke cockily, flipping over the counter and landing beside the increasingly tense AI. Causing GLaDOS to gently exhale the big gulp of air she was holding, Caroline headed over to the fridge. Hastily, GLaDOS took the sponge and began to scrub as vigorously as she could the blade, determined to do what the murderer was clearly too lazy to do before the pesky girl- goddammit, \_woman \_noticed.

What GLaDOS sometimes struggled to deal with was the fact that Caroline II was no longer the teenager who had first stumbled into the Enrichment Centre without a care in the world " she was twenty-four. According to human belief, being twenty-four made her 'adult'. Following the instructions of this belief, GLaDOS also managed to work out that being the age that she was meant that she

should be dead. Anyway, back on track.

In the six years GLaDOS had known Caroline II now, they had both changed. GLaDOS, for one, liked to think that she was now more than capable of not killing somebody, although the urges were often there. Caroline II had changed in more ways than one " she'd grown and matured, now looking much more like her mother had when she was younger. In fact, she'd grown so tall that GLaDOS had needed to make new clothes specific to her size. With her Long Fall Boots on, Caroline II was actually taller than GLaDOS, albeit only just. Sometimes, when Caroline II called on her, GLaDOS would instinctively look down while turning around, only to find that Caroline II's face wasn't there anymore " it was instead looking down upon her! The nerve!

"Uhh, GLaDOS?"

The android nearly jumped out of the body from fright to find the human girl leaning over her with a sandwich hanging out of her mouth. In a muffled voice, she asked;

"Why don't you just use the dishwasher?"

"The utensil was already in the sink, I thought it would save some of my energy." GLaDOS quickly spouted, her face expressionless.

"Ok, whatever you say " but why were you using it in the first place?" She grew increasingly annoyed with the woman's questions. "You don't usually work in the kitchen anymore."

"Well for once, I did. Satisfied?" She snapped in reply, making Caroline smirk.

"I've got a feeling you're hiding something."

"You will continue to have that feeling because I have nothing to hide." GLaDOS replied.

"You're lying."

"Your face is lying."

"I see you've still not learned how to use the 'Your Face' insult yet, GLaDOS."

"But I'm getting better."

Finally, Caroline gave up and simply laughed, turning away and heading for the cafeteria exit. The further away she got, the more uncomfortable GLaDOS felt. She wasn't one for telling the truth, but with Caroline II she felt that it was some sort of obligation to keep the girl correctly informed. Willing herself to keep her mouth shut, her DM Module suffered a temporary malfunction which convinced her mouth to speak the word sitting on the edge of her tongue " "

"Wait!"

Turning back to GLaDOS with a triumphant smirk, Caroline trotted back over, vaulting over the table once more and peering into the sink

expectantly. Feeling something close to embarrassment, the robot lifted the knife out of the water " only to see that blood still coated the handle and red stained the metal. Given the situation, GLaDOS had expected the woman to react worse than she did.

Her face paled and she took a few steps back, staring at GLaDOS in an accusing, terrified manner. However, in a typical Caroline fashion, she still gripped her sandwich defensively in one hand.

"GLaDOS-!? Who-!?"

"First of all, I should clarify that I am not the one who used this knife. Secondly, your stupid male friend is dead."

"And you're expecting me to believe that you weren't the one who did it?" Caroline hissed, taking another step back. "That's your knife, GLaDOS " you even told me what you did with it once."

"Yes, I killed a full-time employee. Violently. But that was an old me," The supercomputer objected. "I'm not that sort of person anymore and you should know that better than anyone."

"Well then, if it somehow wasn't you, then who do you think it was?" The computer's favourite test subject crossed her arms, finally settling for putting the sandwich down on the countertop.

"I don't know that " the fingerprints have been washed off the knife," GLaDOS began. "But what I do know is that they used my knife in an attempt to frame me. They wanted you to turn on me like this."

"Yeah, likely story." Caroline concluded. Before she could even begin to compute walking away, GLaDOS had her pinned viciously to the table, her citrine yellow eyes boring into her very soul with an intensity which was very rarely aimed at her.

"I'm being very serious, Caroline Johnson the Second," Suddenly the handle was shoved into Caroline's hand and GLaDOS stepped back, holding her arms out wide. "But if you still believe your improbable theory that I somehow killed the human male, then kill me here. I won't save myself. I'll be just as dead as I was when your mother had her episode."

"But that would mean you still wouldn't be dead." Caroline pointed out unhelpfully, raising an eyebrow.

"I'd be gone, and that would be the next best thing."

There was a moment of silence. The two remained unmoving, looking at one another.

"Feel honoured " you are the only person I trust enough to give permission to kill me." GLaDOS' words awakened a slumbering feeling within Caroline's mind, like she'd heard them spoken before " although she was certain she hadn't. \_Absolutely certain.\_

"I'm not going to kill you," She put the knife down on the table, but her stern facial expression never changed. "Take me to him."

\* \* \*

><p>GLaDOS knew that Caroline wouldn't kill her, which is why she was bold enough to give the human girl the option. Over the years she had certainly proved herself quite capable of killing, but there would always be some beings she could never bring herself to harm in any way â€" GLaDOS knew she was one of them. She had taken advantage of that to help convince the girl that for once, she was innocent. It was a dirty trick, but GLaDOS practically specialised in dirty tricks.<p>

She guided Caroline across the car park, looking back to see the woman already gazing with a surprising calmness at the body. When they reached him, the supercomputer was perplexed to see Caroline start searching through Eric's pockets, getting her hands covered in his blood in the process.

"May I ask what you are doing?" GLaDOS finally piped up.

"The murderer sometimes leaves a symbol or a note at the scene of the crime, usually on the body. If there is one, it could help us work out who did this and why."

"â€|You got that from CSI, didn't you?" The computer's tone was accusing, and yet she tried to disguise an amused smirk with her hand.

"I wonder if Miami still looks like that. Bet it's all ruins now, huh?" Caroline II responded with a grin, before her face transformed into shock as her hand gripped something in the last pocket of his jumpsuit. She'd hit gold!

Gently pulling out the contents of his pocket, she found that there was a bloodstained note attached to a slightly damp Floppy Disk. She attempted to dry both off on her t-shirt but only succeeded in getting herself covered in the unsanitary red liquid.

"Eww, gross."

She opened up the note and could just make out the remains of black ink through the red. Still legible, she held the piece of paper up to her face and squinted.

"It saysâ€| 'I have finally found you, GLaDOS. Now it's your turn to find me.'"

Despite how eerie the message sounded, GLaDOS didn't even flinch.

"Is this how you humans try to organise 'dates'? You know, those pointless events where you try to get to know a person better so you can have unsanitary relations with them later?"

"I don't think so. Although, if this is how somebody is asking you out on a date, they sound like a creep," Caroline said with a laugh. "Help me get his body down."

\* \* \*

><p>Aperture Science had once had many enemies. However, GLaDOS reasoned with herself that if their worst enemy, Black Mesa had

succumbed to the alien invasion, all the others should have fallen as well. There were a few conclusions GLaDOS could draw from this: One; one of their old enemies had somehow returned and had killed the stupid human male in an attempt to incur her wrath. Well, they failed. They had actually done her a favour. Two; this was one of their more recent enemies, like the aliens or the troop of human males living a few miles up the road and they were looking to pick a fight with the world's greatest supercomputer. Well, GLaDOS admitted that that would piss her off, but it was too early to assume that this was the correct conclusion. Three; this was an entirely new enemy that GLaDOS had never even heard of " in which case, she'd need to try and find this new enemy and eliminate them before they attacked once more. The last thing she wanted was any of the other humans getting caught up in all this. Although she didn't want to admit it, the humans and several matters concerning them had been her primary concern the past six years. Well, that and the new Portal Device she was developing " that should have been more important, actually. Yes, let's concentrate on that from now on.<p>

Burying your loved ones was too old school " rather than waste time digging a hole for Eric and throwing him in, GLaDOS opted for chucking him into the Incinerator while Caroline II's back was turned. She never did find out what GLaDOS did with the body. When Chell and Rosie were informed, they reacted much worse than Caroline II had " for one thing, they actually cried. Caroline II did admit that she was upset " but something about a human life had never struck her as "important. \_She'd liked Eric, but" well, she guessed just not enough. Wheatley had, surprisingly, remained silent when Caroline had told him the news. He didn't even show any evidence of how the news made him felt. As Caroline was about to leave the room to join GLaDOS in examining the Floppy, he finally broke his silence.

"Are you okay, Luv?"

Caroline II turned back around, her face expressionless.

"Yeah, I'm good."

Joining GLaDOS in the central chamber, she found it almost comforting to see the supercomputer back in her chassis.

"You don't need to be here for this, you know. This feels"personal, somehow." She told the woman.

"Don't be stupid, I'm with you all the way, no matter what's on that disk." She grabbed hold of GLaDOS' neck suspension and hauled herself up onto her back, perching quite happily on the computer's head.

"Well, is the disk ready?" She asked GLaDOS, who gave a gentle nod.

"I am downloading the files to my system as we speak. They've been scanned for maliciousness and are safe."

Caroline grinned.

"Good. Let's see if we can find our murderer."

It was unlike her to think of revenge " she decided it was like her way of feeling sympathy for Eric. By finding his killer and murdering him, it would be her own way of showing respect. Tears were not something that she had shed in about five years and she wasn't about to start now. Either way, she was in the right mood to kill somebody. Maybe GLaDOS was rubbing off on her after all.

The files streamed into place on a monitor as it descended from the ceiling. As was custom, GLaDOS raised herself up to meet it, Caroline watching with just as much intensity as the supercomputer.

Most of the files were nothing that GLaDOS hadn't seen before " various Aperture Science coding sheets and image files, all of which GLaDOS had on file already. However, one thing did stand out to her " they were all \_very \_old. From the 1960's, namely, some even earlier. There were even some files concerning Mr. Johnson and Caroline, who GLaDOS could feel watching the screen as well through her optic.

There was one file which GLaDOS couldn't open straight away. This one actually held her attention for a good few minutes while she tried everything to pry it open. Caroline had of course learned this behaviour and silently smirked away while GLaDOS slowly heated up from the mental strain.

"GLaDOS, you're starting to overheat."

"I know. Apologies."

With a sudden unexpected click, the file GLaDOS had been tampering with opened in a separate window.

"Ahh, so that was the problem. There was a firewall blocking my way," She grumbled. "This murderer is already annoying me and I haven't even killed him with neurotoxin yet."

"Easy girl, we'll get 'em." Caroline jokingly patted GLaDOS' white hood. She ignored the supercomputer's optic narrowing in irritation.

"So what does the file say?" There was a few moments of silence before GLaDOS replied.

"It's messy code, but it definitely says something" The anticipation was starting to frustrate Caroline.

"Come on, come on!"

"I'm working on it. Don't make me put you in the incinerator for timeout again." GLaDOS warned.

"What do I look like, five?" Caroline replied

"You certainly act like it."

The code was suddenly filling the entire screen. Each number and letter slowly morphed into a pixel. Soon, the pixels were forming an image.

"It looks like the hull of a ship." GLaDOS observed. A pixelated 'B'

appeared on screen. Then, an 'O', then an 'R'â€|

"O-Oh my."

"What, what is it?" As much as she looked, Caroline couldn't comprehend what she was seeing. The image seemed so familiar,

"That ship â€" that ship is the Borealis."

The test subject indicated to the top right corner of the image, once it was completed.

"GLaDOS, aren't those coordinates?"

"Yes, they are written onto the picture." Her optic zoomed in on the tiny white numbers. Caroline shifted, struggling to remain seated on the now seething hot machine.

"Well?" She demanded.

"The co-ordinates â€" they point to a location in Antarctica." GLaDOS replied with, her voice ever so slightly shaking.

"And that means, what?"

"Whoever killed the stupid human â€" they found the Borealis too."

\* \* \*

><p>Well, what do you guys think of that?!<p>

I know this is already starting off quite differently from the first story, but that is the whole point. I'm taking this story much more seriously than I did at the start of the first one. I also hope that this one reads a lot better. I've not started the next chapter yet, so it could take a little while. But don't worry, you shouldn't be waiting too long!

~Lagiacrus

## 2. Surprise!

Hey guys, and welcome to the second chapter! Sorry it took a while!

Also, this one's a little weird, just a warning.

~Lagiacrus

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><p>Caroline II found it hard to tell what was running through the supercomputer's head as she transferred into her android body and stormed down the corridor, leaving the test subject to helplessly give chase. GLaDOS ignored anything and everything around her, gaze focused entirely on her goal â€" the exit to the surface.<p>

"GLaDOS, what are you doing!?" Caroline II called after her, barely



piercing the determined fog that had formed around the android's CPU. Looking to answer the Imbecile's no doubt foolish question, GLaDOS peered into her Data Log and found her newest and current task â€" 'Find the Borealis'.

"I'm going to find the Borealis." She repeated.

"Like hell you are!" Caroline II's vicious voice was the last thing GLaDOS heard before she was seeing static at the corners of her vision and was brought to the floor by a heavy weight upon her back. Caroline had just jumped onto her from behind, wrapping her arms tightly around the android's neck and flooring her. It might seem a bit extreme to us, but to them it was normal â€" an action that only they understood. It was basically Caroline telling GLaDOS to slow the fuck down.

"You actually caught me by surprise that time." GLaDOS huffed impatiently, to which Caroline grinned.

"\_And \_I brought you down. There's a first time for everything, I guess."

"But you forgot about one simple thing."

Seconds later Caroline was soaring through the air, her face the picture of shock. GLaDOS had grabbed hold of her arms and thrown her right over her head. She went flying down the hallway like a dart, before she managed to make slight contact with the ground and stopped herself from colliding with the wall. However, the impact had still left her in a lot of pain. When she finally was able to concentrate enough, she saw GLaDOS stepping past her, continuing on her way.

"GLaDOS, wait! Hear me out!" Ignoring the agony, Caroline leapt after the android, grabbing hold of her wrist.

"What?" She snapped in reply.

"It's not like you to rush into something without thinking about the consequences." The human pointed out.

This made the android stop. She turned to face the cocky human, eyes narrowed.

"I have thought about it."

"Not enough, clearly. There's so many things to consider â€" for one thing, it could be a trap. The Borealis might not even be out there." Her words were hectic, desperate.

"If that is the case and our killer does try to murder me, then I'll simply transfer back into my chassis like nothing happened." The computer blandly responded with.

"There's no way you'll be able to keep a connection going all the way out there, GLaDOS. Besides, do you even know how you're gonna get transport?"

"Hm? "

"There's that thing you showed meâ€¦ the sea, right? The ocean? Isn't that in the way?"

The supercomputer felt the urge to turn away and punch herself in the face. Yes, the Imbecile had made a point â€" the ocean \_was\_ \_in\_ the way of her passage to Antarctica. However, she could improvise. Once she made it to the shore, there had to be something she could use to cross the ocean. It wouldn't take her long to think of it at the time.

"Easily bypassed." She finally responded to Caroline.

"What if this killer has a way of actually murdering you? Like, you can't get back to your chassis and you are actually \_dead?\_"

"Once again, easily bypassed."

"\_How!?!\_ You can't bypass anything if you're dead!" Caroline insisted but found the supercomputer gone from her grasp and already a good distance away from her. She crossed her arms and sighed, leaning against the wall and placing a hand over her stomach, ignoring the slight feeling of sickness that had welled up within her.

By the time Caroline had reached anybody to warn them about GLaDOS, the supercomputer had managed to make good progress through the facility and was walking out through the main lobby when she felt a hand on her shoulder. She contemplated not even stopping, but reached the decision that simply addressing her new nuisance would be easier. This nuisance turned out to be Chell.

"What the hell do you think you're doing?" Her voice was sharp, her nose wrinkled in annoyance. GLaDOS recognized these classic human behaviours and decided it would be easier for her if she simply conversed with the woman.

"I'm going to find the Borealis and bring it back under the control of Aperture Science." She stated simply. The way the human's face dropped would have been slightly amusing, had the computer been in the mood for such things.

"You're being completely serious, aren't you?" Chell was the one to laugh. When GLaDOS didn't respond, her dark skin paled considerably.

"GLaDOS, you know you can't just waltz on up to the Borealis, right? Without something that can fly, it's impossible."

"I'm sure I'll be able to figure something out." Her stubborn response. Chell sighed, pursuing the android as she tried to walk away.

"You aren't in your chassis, GLaDOS â€" you're strong, but you're not indestructible. It's dangerous out here, at least let us come with you."

This triggered an interesting response from the supercomputer, who spun around and began steering the older woman back towards the facility.

"No."

"Why not?" Chell hissed.

"According to my most recent physical examinations, none of you are fit for long-distance travel. You would all be at greater risk than me." GLaDOS told her, eventually getting her back into the lobby.

"And since when do you care about us?" Chell asked, crossing her arms with a smirk. She received no reply â€" only the slight widening of the gently glowing yellow eyes of the android in front of her were any indication of what she was thinking. With an agitated flick of her snow white hair, GLaDOS turned around and exited the facility. This time, Chell let her go â€" she had been indoors all of her life. She was so stubborn â€" it was better that GLaDOS taught herself what the outside world was really like. She had no doubt that the computer would be back before long, and they could actually sit down and plan how they were meant to go about this. It was clear that GLaDOS wanted to track down the ship and deal with whoever had found it before them, but in this day and age there was no way it would be as simple as that. With functioning transport hard to come by and with long-distance teleportation not perfected yet, there was just no way to travel to Antarctica in enough time to rescue the Borealis before its current inhabitant managed to access its top secret cargo. But, GLaDOS was right, at least about her â€" she was getting too old to go about gallivanting outside. She was growing fragile, that much she knew â€" but Caroline II on the other handâ€¦ she was the fittest out of them all. Plus, her last health examination had revealed that she was about as fit and healthy as a gold-winning Olympic athlete. Plus, she had nearly no empathy which pretty much confirmed that she'd be able to defend herself outside. What was stopping the supercomputer from bringing her along?

Chell journeyed back into the facility, heading to the cafeteria when she passed the staff toilets. The door was now hanging off a hinge, like somebody had crashed into it full force. Stepping into the tiled room, she spotted one cubicle with the door hanging open. She could just see two long fall boots under the frame. There was only one person left who that could be.

"Uhh, Caroline? Are you okay?" She asked, nervously.

"Hey mom." The deep, raspy voice of her daughter responded. Sensing that something was wrong, Chell rushed her way over to see Caroline hunched over the toilet, retching the contents of her stomach into the porcelain bowl.

"Holy shit!" Was all the mother could get out. Caroline II, through some kind of miracle had never been sick before. She'd had the common cold and whatnot, but nothing like this.

"I don't know what's wrong," Caroline gasped for breath, before ducking into the bowl again. Chell winced at the sound, gently rubbing her daughter's back and pulling her hair back out of her face. When the poor thing was finally able to stop, she cast a glance back at her mother. "I've never felt like this before."

That was not a good sign at all. A mental list of everything that could be wrong with Caroline flashed before her eyes, nearly sending her into panic. She tried to reason with herself that it was just

something she'd eaten, but she couldn't shake the fear that something else was wrong. When it seemed that Caroline had finally stopped, she helped the girl to her feet and assisted her to the medical ward. When Rosie and Wheatley heard the news through an announcement from Chell, they rushed to the ward as quickly as they could.

Caroline was sitting upright on the bed, pale as a sheet and barely able to keep steady. When Wheatley entered, he started fearfully babbling almost immediately, to which Rosie had to insist that he shut up.

"She probably just has a little stomach bug, Chell. I don't think it's much to worry about." Rosie had done the usual procedure â€" checking Caroline's irises and tongue and pressing down on her stomach had revealed no obvious abnormalities.

"I've been feeling a little nauseous for a few weeks, but I barely noticed it until now." Caroline told her, to which Rosie's brow furrowed.

"This is the first time you've ever been sick?" The scientist questioned, to which Caroline nodded.

"Have you been feeling tired or dehydrated recently?"

"Both, but not enough to stop me testing or anything." The test subject responded with. Rosie crossed her arms, gazing down at the floor for a moment.

"It doesn't sound like anything serious, but I'm trusting your instinct, Chell. I'm going to see if I can get in contact with GLaDOS. I have a feeling she'd want to know about this." She left the room, leaving Chell and Wheatley gazing worriedly at the young Caroline, who was now lying on the bed, staring up at the ceiling with a hand on her stomach.

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><p>Dusk was coming and the supercomputer hadn't made it far. In fact, from where she was standing on the worn out tarmac road she could still see the Enrichment Centre. She was just passing the Bloodhawk Camp when they had tried to attack her. It was fair to say that they wouldn't be trying that again. Examining curiously the Lambda symbol on one of their outfits, she tried to wipe the blood from her dress and kept moving. She grumbled when it failed to shift â€" blood <em>never <em>washed out of this particular dress. It was \_ruined. \_She'd need to try a new outfit once this was all over.

It was when the Facility was finally out of sight that she received an incoming call from Rosie, which came up as a flashing phone icon at the corner of her vision. With a sigh she accepted the call and Rosie's face popped up like a hologram in front of her.

"Hey, GLaDOS? I know you're on an adventure or something, but just how far away are you?" She asked hastily, fear in her voice.

"I'm not that far. Why does it matter?" GLaDOS responded impatiently. The scientist before her flinched at the venom in her tone.

"It's just that Caroline's sick, and we're not sure what's wrong with

herâ€|"

Making sure to release the biggest sigh she could manage, GLaDOS responded;

"Okay, fine. I'm coming back." Then, she hung up, leaving Rosie standing awkwardly in front of her computer.

She got no further than a few steps back towards the Enrichment Centre when her sensors started bleeping out of control â€" something was attempting to sneak up on her. Spinning around and switching to heat vision, she saw the yellow and red outline of a canine, bent low and watching her. It was one of those damned coyotes that Caroline II hated so much. Switching to nightvision, she knelt down ever so slightly, ready to move at a moment's notice. The world around her became green and bright but also incredibly grainy, leaving the creature's flashing white eyes the only things visible.

The stand-off lasted a good minute or two, before the coyote began to growl and spit. GLaDOS backed away slightly â€" this behaviour was new to her, strange and alien. Not knowing what else to do, she responded in kind and did a growl of her own. Surprisingly the coyote fell back into silence and its ears pricked. Finally, the beast leaped.

She took in everything and absorbed it into data â€" the readiness of its claws, the baring of its fangs, the ears flat against its head, even the way it jumped and the distance away from the ground it was. She did a quick calculation â€" and ducked.

Just as it was flying helplessly over her head, she reached up and grabbed the beast by a clump of its matted sandy fur. Then, with nothing more than a flick of her wrist, she threw the mongrel away several feet into the air and simply left, a quick calculation telling her the result of her actions. When she was already out of earshot, the soaring coyote hit hard against an old oak tree and broke its back and shattered its bones, rendering it dead before it even hit the ground.

Her return to Aperture Science wasn't until late into the night. Much to her annoyance, Wheatley was the one to guide her to Caroline II, who had retired to her bed for the night. Although she claimed she was feeling much better, GLaDOS insisted that she properly examine the young woman before she let the matter rest. While the three of them travelled down the various corridors to the medical bay, Caroline spoke up.

"So, did you find the Borealis?" She asked teasingly, causing the robot to glower at her.

"No, I did not. I barely got out of sight of the Facility." GLaDOS replied with.

"I see you ran into some trouble, too."

"Nothing I couldn't dispose of. Just some humans and a filthy canine."

"Oh, you ran into the coyotes?" Caroline seemed impressed, her eyes sparkling with interest.

"Only one. It died two minutes later."

"I take it you had something to do with that."

"I initiated a counter-attack and the tree it struck after did the rest."

"Charmingâ€|" The girl commented as they entered the medical office.

"You should know what to do by now." GLaDOS indicated to the bed and Caroline climbed onto it, lying on her back with her arms at her sides, smirking in amusement all the while. Any other position wouldn't be tolerated by GLaDOS â€" she couldn't even stand it if you put a hand on your stomach.

"Tell me about your symptoms." The supercomputer demanded, checking Caroline's irises with the light and tongue with a stick much like Rosie had.

"Ah wash shick earlier-" GLaDOS removed the stick from the girl's tongue. "-but I've been feeling nauseous for a few weeks now. I've been feeling tired for about a week, and dehydrated for a day or two." If you weren't precise with GLaDOS, she just got annoyed at you and ranted about how much longer you were making a simple process.

"So whatever is wrong with you, you've been stupid enough to allow it to get worse." The disapproving stare that the AI gave Caroline set her off suddenly.

"Well, my most sincere apologies, your highness, for not even allowing my so-called illness to faze me!" The human snapped, causing GLaDOS to smirk.

"So, you're having mood swings too."

"E-Eh?"

"Remember last week when you were feeling fine and then two seconds later the moron said something and you started ejecting tears? That was a mood swing, too."

"Oh."

All the while GLaDOS was cycling through all of the medical files stored within her database, sifting through various recognized human diseases and setting them to one side when she found one that match's Caroline's health, but slowly discarding them again after some further thought. When she found herself unable to reach a trustworthy diagnosis, she knew there was only one thing to do.

"I'm going to use the Aperture Science Medical Multi-scan Device on you." She took the surprisingly puny black device out of a black box under the doctor's desk. It fit snugly into the palm of GLaDOS' robotic hand, and with a click of a hidden button on the side it switched on.

"Aww, I hate that thing. It's too bright." Caroline grumbled but the

android just ignored her.

The Aperture Science Medical Multi-scan Device, or the Multi-scanner for short was a tiny piece of equipment which used a built-in long-reaching micro-scanner with over ten different modes to scan biological lifeforms and locate abnormalities in their systems in the same manner that the giant scanners in hospitals did. MRI, PET, CT, X-Ray, Ultrasound, it was all there, you just had to name it "using 'top secret' technology, the device had the ability to recreate the required situation for the scan and perform them as if the lifeform was actually in hospital. You could say the scans themselves were simulated, but they still produced very real results. The device was never officially released to the public and had just passed the testing stages when GLaDOS had her "Episode'. The device in GLaDOS' hand right now was the only one which was ever considered to be a fully functional, stable model. It would automatically detect Caroline as a living thing and upon one command from GLaDOS it would scan her body with any of the methods the computer picked and would display the scan as it happened on the screen behind her.

Caroline kept her eyes screwed shut as the AI shuffled through the various scans, and each time the scan came back clean. When she did the MRI scan, something abnormal finally came up.

"There appears to be some muscle swelling in the abdomen and thighs." She noted, eyeing the screen with slight concern. She deleted at least twenty possible diseases and problems from her list upon this discovery, leaving only three possible ones. One of them made the android break out into an artificial sweat. Trying to hide her shaking hands from the girl still wincing on the bed, she switched the device to Ultrasound mode.

"GLaDOS, I think you're nervous about something. I can hear your hands shaking from here." Caroline pointed out to which the robot mentally cursed.

"That's just you being an Imbecile; now remain perfectly still."

She held the device as steady as she could above Caroline, allowing it to scan her from top to bottom, fearing the worst. The device gave a bleep, signalling yet another completed scan, and GLaDOS whirled around to cycle through the scan images on the screen. Finally, she reached one particular image, and her body actually locked up from shock.

After the android didn't move for about five minutes, Caroline finally decided that she might be done scanning and opened her eyes. She sat up, examining GLaDOS who was hunched in front of the screen, slack-jawed and wide-eyed. She shifted so her legs were dangling off the bed and poked GLaDOS in the back, making her spasm for a moment until she came to her senses. Finally, she stood up straight, brushed off her dress and turned around to face Caroline, indicating to the screen as she did so.

"I thought I warned you that hugging between employees was strictly prohibited."

"Yeah, you did. Why?" Caroline looked baffled. She couldn't make sense of what GLaDOS was pointing to.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

"Of course I'm angry, you foul-smelling, mentally stunted degenerate!" Never before had she spoken with such power and fury. The loud voice gave the poor human chills and she tried to back away



as GLaDOS neared. "I warned you about him. I told you not to trust him and then you go and break protocol like the Imbecile you are!"

"Calm down!" Caroline begged, no avail.

"I'll calm down once we have that hellspawn out of your body." The android growled, advancing back over to the worktop and fishing through a small box of tools on its crudely dented surface. When she finally withdrew a strange, unidentifiable surgery tool from the box's innards the test subject leapt from the table and darted out of the room. Having calculated the action, GLaDOS was after her without a moment's delay.

She refused to look back, she knew she would only panic if she did. Determined to stay calm, Caroline ran with all the strength she could muster down the corridor, painfully aware of the android's rapid footsteps behind her, continuously drawing closer.

"GLaDOS, stop it!" She called in a desperate attempt to help the computer see reason but she never even received a reply. Clearly, GLaDOS was focused on her task â€" that task being to physically pull the developing child out of her.

Luckily, Chell happened to turn around the corner at that moment as Caroline approached, and she crashed into her mother with surprising force.

"Mom, I'm pregnant! GLaDOS is trying to kill the baby!"

"Please tell me you're joking." Was Chell's only, completely relaxed response.

"\_Would GLaDOS be advancing on me with a fucking KNIFE if I was joking!?" Caroline screeched, only to find her mom gone from her vision. She turned down the hallway and saw Chell flying at the manic GLaDOS (who literally had smoke coming out of her nostrils), her fist poised to connect harshly with the android's face. Caroline screwed her eyes shut and turned away â€" the noise of skin against metal was awful â€" she definitely heard \_something\_ break but she prayed to whatever God there was that it \_wasn't\_ her mother's hand.

When she opened her eyes, she saw GLaDOS inches away from the ground and her mother's hand was ever so slightly bent out of place, with blood dripping from countless open wounds. Finally, the android hit the floor and her hand flew immediately to her now dented face, eyes aglow with frustration.

"I've been waiting to do that to you for about forty years." Chell admitted, checking her hand for any serious injuries. Content that she'd just broken a few bones, she turned to her daughter, expression demanding an explanation.

"The fact that you're not screaming right now is really frightening me." Caroline admitted, to which Chell smiled.

"I'm used to breaking a few bones."

And that was how Caroline and Chell ended up sitting calmly at a table in the cafeteria while GLaDOS paced wildly around the room,

occasionally glancing at her knife still in the sink and then back to Caroline's stomach. She filled her mother in with all of the details " about GLaDOS finding the baby using the scanner and then her explanation for how the child came about. Chell didn't react as badly as GLaDOS " but the conversation did end with countless verbal insults and Caroline II storming into her room " which had once been the Break Room, until she'd decided to convert it " and closing the automatic doors behind her with a violent voice command. Upon another practically spat voice command, a number of the wall panels separated in order for her to step out onto the Aperture Science logo. Sergei, her forever faithful companion turret, emerged from wherever he had been hiding all day.

"Hello?" He announced his presence. She cast him a glance, but quickly turned away. He crept up on his spindly little legs and repeated himself, more nervously than before. "H-Hello?"

She wordlessly scooped him up into her arms before stepping out onto the logo. She sat down on the inside, letting her legs dangle uselessly off the side.

"I fucked up, Sergei," She admitted, but the turret remained silent. "I'm pregnant, somehow. GLaDOS is trying to kill me, and my mom broke her hand stopping her."

"The answer to everything is locked beneath the ice." He spoke in his usual singsong voice. For a second the girl was confused, until she remembered.

"Oh, that's right. You must be talking about the Borealis."

She allowed him to journey back into the former Break Room, where he amusedly began to roll about on the floor, whooping as he went. She sighed, gazing out over the trees that she had once inhabited, swaying gently in a pleasant summer breeze.

"I bet a rusty old ship can't explain why I was such an idiot, though."

\* \* \*

><p>However, GLaDOS felt differently. As far as she was concerned the wreckage of the Borealis was going to contain the answer to the Da Vinci Code " or at least her version of it. While the incident with Caroline was on her mind, she did her best to ignore it and prepare for the journey ahead " <em>properly, <em>this time. She was in the Android holding bay, where she had changed her current outfit into one more suited for the task at hand and was now preparing all of the equipment she needed for the journey. Hopefully, she wouldn't see Caroline again until the foetus was no longer a foetus but was a tiny, slimy and struggling shrivelled up red thing that screamed. Actually, she'd rather never see it again. Ever.

Actually, she hoped it unfortunately died. Not in the womb, preferably, that would hurt Caroline. But she really did wish it would die. Preferably before she had to meet it. She made a quick note to spend at least ten months at the site of the Borealis before she decided to head back. If it was still there upon her return, she supposed that she'd have to kill it herself. The last thing she needed was another human running riot through her beautiful

facility.

"U-Um, excuse me?" She had to admit that the Moron creeping up behind her had startled her somewhat, but not enough for her to strongly react. The worse she did was spin around, knocking the backpack she had been preparing onto the floor and delivered a shattering kick to the personality core who could only be called Wheatley, sending him off the management rail and rolling along the tiled floor.

"O-Ow! That was uncalled for, Luv!" He barked. GLaDOS registered the situation and picked up the annoying talking ball, stuffing him back onto his rail.

"What do you want?" She hissed, moving next to pick up her bag and continuing to pack it with essential equipment. For a moment the personality core stared blankly at the back of her head before finally snapping into reality.

"Oh, uhâ€¦ h-have you seen Caroline going around anywhere? I, uhâ€¦ I haven't seen her all day, was just wondering if-if you-"

"I doubt she wants to see anyone, especially not you, Moron."

"Why!? I mean, what's wrong with me!?" He whined.

"For one thing, you are technically male. I doubt she wants to have much to do with any male right now," The android chuckled darkly, before closing the flimsy bag over. "Now, please get out. I need to change out of these clothes before I go to the Borealis."

\* \* \*

><p>Wheatley had no idea what to expect when he approached the door to the Break Room. GLaDOS' words had set him on edge â€" he was worried that the young woman was angry at him, for whatever reason. It wouldn't surprise him, but this time he couldn't think what he had possibly done wrong. He was vaguely aware of hearing the front doors to the facility sliding open downstairs, but ignored them â€" he only had one thing that mattered to him right now.<p>

He knocked on the door a few times with his handle.

"Y-You in there, Luv?" He called gently, not enough to invoke any wrath from the adult.

"Fuck off." The cold response made him wince and back away from the door. Soon, he shuffled his way back over and knocked again.

"Come on, Caroline. Please let me in."

"Not right now, Wheatley!" Another harsh rejection. He rolled his bright blue eye and backed away from the door once more, purposely this time. He accessed the door mainframe and requested of it a simple task â€" he and the door mainframe were good friends â€" and moments later the door to Caroline's bedroom slid open.

The girl in question was standing half-naked in front of a full-body mirror embedded into the wall, quizzically glaring at her stomach. It took him a whole ten seconds to process what he was seeing and finally yell and turn away. It took her a further two seconds to

realize that he was there, scream and demand he leave the room.

An awkward minute later, when Caroline was dressed, she once again separated the wall panels to let some sunlight into the room and she sat on the bed with Wheatley on her lap. She told him everything and monitored his expressions closely "his eye could tell you a lot about how he felt if you just knew what to look for. However, this time he kept his expression steady and listened calmly, never saying a word until he knew she had finished relaying her tale. Finally, she silenced and awaited his disappointment, his anger, his insults "anything.

"Y-You see if it's a boy, Luv" will you name it after me?" He chirped, a little hint of excitement in his eye. The girl's face turned bright red and she averted her gaze to the ground.

"I'll think about it."

The sound of a ruckus outside drew Caroline out onto the logo, where she spotted GLaDOS in the centre of the car park "surrounded by Coyotes. Literally, the whole pack.

"Shit," Caroline darted back into the room, searching desperately for her bow. "GLaDOS!"

\* \* \*

><p>Although, the supercomputer was in no true danger. Dressed in a new, cleaner outfit, complete with a new invention of hers in the form of a white headpiece that, when placed over her eye would allow her to scan the world around her more easily, the coyotes were already dead. She scanned each and every one of the snarling beasts circling her "sixteen in all "and measured their individual strengths, weaknesses and strategies. Before Caroline high above had even readied an arrow, the coyotes were upon GLaDOS like greedy moths to a flame "a flame, which they didn't know, could burn like hell.<p>

It was hard for Caroline to register what she was seeing. One thing she could definitely make out was that GLaDOS had managed to slide away from the coyotes and had ripped out the tongues of two that decided to continue pursuing her. Undeterred, the mangy creatures continued their assault "she ducked down, grabbed one by the leg and spun around, using the coyote as a club to take out its comrades. Then, she ripped off said coyote's leg and tossed it aside like a candy wrapper. The stunned girl could only continue to watch as they continued to leap at the android and lose limbs in the process. Soon, only one of the dogs remained standing, but it was covered in the blood of its family members. Much like she had earlier, GLaDOS matched its growling tone and managed to scare it off with the sheer power of her voice. It yelped and fled, charging away back into the trees. Now Caroline knew why the beasts typically hated the facility.

"Are you going after the Borealis?" Caroline called down to her, to which the supercomputer replied with a nod. The test subject grinned, swinging the bow across her back.

"Can I come?"

\* \* \*

><p>GLaDOS was having none of it. Caroline tried everything â€" she even tried hiding from her as she left and tracking her from afar. They got as far as the Bloodhawk camp and GLaDOS finally caught her in the scanner. With a heavy heart, Caroline had been sent back to the facility. Apparently she was 'breaking further protocol' by 'testing while impregnated' (which she distinctly remembered wasn't even a protocol). When she walked in the front door, she was greeted by Rosie, who had ditched all of her science gear for a typical Test Subject's outfit and a warm khaki jacket. On her back she had a large, military-style backpack, clearly filled to the brim.<p>

"Going somewhere?" Caroline asked in amusement as she passed, only to find that the older woman followed her.

"I'm going with you to the Borealis. Goodness knows what you'll find; but I guessed you'd need an extra pair of hands."

"GLaDOS caught me and said I couldn't go with her." The Imbecile said with a shrug, continuing towards the main hallway. Rosie grabbed hold of the girl's tank top, pulling her back towards the front door.

"And since when do you ever listen to her?"

"Since she drew a fucking knife on me today," The younger girl seethed. "And possibly killed Eric."

"I don't think she did kill Eric. I think for once she was telling the truth." Rosie exclaimed as she pulled the test subject behind her out into the car park. She approached an old ruined truck up against the side of the park, opened the back of it up and climbed inside.

"Wait there a moment. We can use this to catch up to GLaDOS."

The girl crossed her arms and sighed, tapping her foot against the cracked tarmac as Rosie fooled around inside the truck â€" knocking things over, cursing, breaking glass â€" but clearly she was working on something, perhaps a piece of machinery. After about fifteen minutes of the tomfoolery, something rumbled to life inside the truck's thin metal walls and less than a second later, Caroline jumped back as a strange two-wheeled vehicle crawled slowly out of the truck and onto the tarmac, spitting out vile grey clouds as it went. It was like a fiery demon, an untameable alien creature that growled louder than an agitated chassis GLaDOS â€" and on its back, as if it was the most normal thing in the world, was Rosie.

"Caroline, meet Bessie, my motorbike. Used to take this baby to work every morning," She said with a smile, patting the metal monster's dark green paintjob fondly. "Been fixing her up these past few years with parts from the facility. She's all ready to go."

"W-What do you mean?" Caroline had no idea what a motorbike was. She felt as though Rosie had mentioned them before but had no recollection of how she described them.

"Basically, you need to get on." Rosie nodded to the small patch of leather seating behind her, and Caroline gulped.

Mere seconds later Rosie was zig-zagging down the road at a speed the federal road laws would no doubt discourage, ignoring the test subject sitting behind her suffocating her slowly with her iron grip and screaming like a banshee.

"Slow down slow down SLOW DOWN I'M GONNA DIE PLEASE OH MY GOD-!"

"You're fine! Just keep hanging on to me and you won't fall off! She can't be far away now!" Rosie called back to her with an amused smirk, relishing in the feeling of the wind rushing through her hair once more. It had been far too long since she'd experienced this â€" working for Aperture had taken so many of her favourite pastimes away from her. In some cases, she was almost glad for the alien invasion. It had given her some freedom back. Far past the Bloodhawk base and nearly clear of the forest altogether, they found GLaDOS, standing at the edge of the forest and tracing the road with her eyes, gazing off into the giant city in the distance. Rosie brought the bike to a stop and Caroline dazedly fell off, hitting the floor roughly. The scientist had to shake her and give her some water to bring her around. Through all of this, GLaDOS ignored them, like she wasn't even aware of them existing. Finally, she turned to the weakened woman and the scientist motorbiker extraordinaire, her expression the height of displeasure.

"Go back, now."

"No." Caroline hissed, wrenching herself out of Rosie's grip and to her feet, strutting right up to the android and standing toe-to-toe with her.

"GLaDOS, you can't do this by yourself. It's impossible. I know the Borealis means so much to you, and if you really want to go after it, at least let us come with you to help you out a little," Rosie spoke gently, a voice she didn't usually reserve for GLaDOS. "You're travelling to \_Antarctica, \_GLaDOS â€" not to your local supermarket. This isn't going to be easy. We don't even know what we'll meet on the way."

"Rosie's right. This isn't something you can manage alone, you need help. Just admit it already." Caroline chimed in, her expression firm and focused. GLaDOS turned away and looked back to the city, doing a quick calculation of what distance away it was. Only half an hour on foot, even less with the strange vehicle they had arrived on. Yes, she maybe would need them â€" even if it was just because they could cut the travel time in half.

"If you're going to come along," She sighed, casting a glance at Caroline. "Don't get yourselves murdered. Also," the android suddenly grinned. "Please try to keep up with me, if you can. If not, good â€" It means I don't have to look at the two of you for any length of time."

Caroline had no time to even blink before the android was off like a flash, darting off along the road towards the city ahead.

"Shit, Caroline, get on!" Rosie screamed with a laugh and the girl

scrambled for a handhold as the motorbike took off, spitting out a frighteningly huge jet of flame as it roared to life once more.

\* \* \*

><p>"Well, they forgot about us." Chell sighed, finally placing down her extremely dull edition of <em>Pride and Prejudice. <em>She turned her gaze to the blue-eyed personality core, who was staring worriedly at the set of monitors of the control room where they currently sat.

"I-I'm worried about them, Chell. With Caroline being the way she is, to be stuck with GLaDOS, I-I justâ€|" He appeared to shudder at the thought. The elder woman's smile broadened.

"I'm sure she'll be fine. If she's anything like me, or her dadâ€| she'll definitely be fine out there." Chell turned to the monitors and did her best to connect some of them to various video feeds.

"Rosie said she was taking a video camera with her. It's Aperture branded so we might be able to link it to these monitors when she decides to use it. Plus, both she and Caroline still have their radios. We just need to hope the connections hold out."

"What if they don't?" Wheatley questioned, his voice somewhat frantic.

"If they don't," Chell's smile only grew. "We'll just have to wait for them to come home â€" Because don't worry, they will." Just like that, she stood up and left the room, leaving Wheatley staring at the static-filled monitors, his cold, mechanical heart filled with dread. \_Something is going to go horribly wrong, even if they do find it, \_He thought to himself. \_Something always doesâ€|\_

\* \* \*

><p>Well, I hope you all enjoyed that because, worst case scenario, this could be the last one for a while. Like I said, I start university in two days. I don't think I'll be very busy for the first week or two, but once I get into the full swing of things, all fanfiction is going to have to take a seat on the bench for a while - even this one, as important as it is to me. I'll still update it when I can, I just can't guarantee that updates will be regular. They could be anything from weeks to months apart once university really gets going - but don't worry, all you've got to do is message me and I'll let you know my progress. Even if I'm not posting, I'll always be online.<p>

You guys are all awesome! Please continue to be awesome!  
:D

~Lagiacrux

#### 4. Not-so-giant Enemy Crab

**\*\*HI THERE GUYS!\*\*** I'm so sorry about the maaaaaassive wait on this chapter - University crashed into me like a bull on steroids, heh. However, my work is starting to slow down a little so I churned the

rest of this out when I had a spare moment today - it's been staring me in the face for about a month, you have no idea.

Apologies but it's not too long - I rounded it off quite nicely in preparation for the next chapter, which hopefully shouldn't take as long as this one - I have exams in December so things will get a little slow again. Plus, my life in general is quite busy, and I am now working on not just one but TWO novels, so they take priority over this story.

I'm sorry about the long delay, and there hopefully shouldn't be one this long again.

~Lagiacrux

\* \* \*

><p>The race came to an abrupt end upon the passing of the first few buildings, which were for the most part intact, but in quite a state. Caroline had never seen anything like it. When GLaDOS checked the map she could bring up of the area, she said the pictures of the buildings didn't correspond with what they looked like now. The pictures she could find displayed a wide array of brightly coloured suburban homesteads, shining metallic skyscrapers that seemed to block out the sun and delightful little shops and cafes lining the streets. It was all ruins now.<p>

"This is Traverse City," Rosie told them. "My flat was here."

GLaDOS leaned up against an old streetlight, flicking through portions of the map with her headpiece. After a moment, she grunted in frustration.

"Why on Earth do humans need such big settlements?"

"There used to be a lot of us, GLaDOS." Rosie laughed. She rolled the motorbike up to the side of the street, where Caroline dismounted and commenced immediately her exploration.

"How many precisely?" GLaDOS asked, tearing some worn out posters off of a lamppost before tossing them aside with a sneer.

"Six billion, I think? Or something."

The look on the android's face was something very close to shock.

"That sounds \_awful. \_I can barely stand \_one \_human." She growled.

"So, what's the plan? We can't \_walk\_ to the Borealis." Caroline II pointed out, smirking at the android who for whatever reason was staring very intently back at her.

"Our best option is to look for some form of vehicle that still works, then use it to get to the shore. From there we might be able to find a boat or something that flies to take us over the water." Rosie suggested, although she knew that it was wishful thinking.



"Sounds good to me!" Before anybody could think to stop her, Caroline was trotting leisurely down the street. Rosie followed wordlessly and for a moment GLaDOS watched them go. She examined more of the posters, before the deathly silence around her began to irk her. She cast her gaze down one of the side streets " she could swear she saw a tumbleweed roll its way across the road, before disappearing behind a ruined car. She looked back to Caroline and Rosie, by now so far away that she had to zoom in on them. She gulped, swallowing some of the utterly pointless simulated saliva down the back of her throat.

"W-Wait." She uttered, pursuing the two employees deeper into the ruinous world.

"Hey, GLaDOS, look at this! Oh, and this! Ooh, look at that!" Caroline zoomed in on everything of interest she could find, picking it up if it was small enough and allowing the supercomputer tailing her like a lost puppy to examine it. She was handed numerous objects, many broken, charred or just damaged overall, but it was all of use to GLaDOS.

"Rubick's Cube," Rosie was struck on the head by the multi-coloured cube as it was tossed aside by the satisfied robot. "Engine Exhaust, probably from a 4x4," The scientist just managed to dodge the flying car part. "Spatula, a common kitchen utensil," THWACK. "And " Caroline, you Imbecile, this is a gun." Rosie flinched but found that the gun did not strike her. Instead, the android handed it back to Caroline.

"Is it loaded?" She asked, to which the younger human checked the weapon clumsily. When she finally managed to check inside the magazine, she saw that a few bullets remained " it would be all she needed, hopefully.

"Yeah, it's got a few bullets left."

"Good. Keep it with you." And with that, GLaDOS' attention was stolen by something else. Caroline hung back to walk beside Rosie.

"Is it me or is GLaDOS acting funny?"

"In what way?" The scientist replied with a smirk.

"She's being surprisingly \_kind,\_" Caroline responded with, clicking the safety on and placing the handgun in her pocket."She'd never let me handle a gun back in the facility unless if it was a Portal Gun."

"I think things are a bit different now. This world is just as alien to her as it is to you " if not more. She won't be letting it on, but I think she's nervous."

Caroline nearly snickered at the thought. GLaDOS had never been one to fear the unknown, at least not at any point before.

"You really think so?"

"I know so," Rosie pointed to the android strutting a few paces ahead. "Just watch her, you'll see it."

As if on cue, there was the abrupt smashing of glass nearby, causing the android's head to snap in the direction of the offending sound. Her eyes were wide, mouth pressed into a frown and her simulated breathing seemed to be a little quicker than the norm.

"See? Back in the facility, if she'd heard a sound like that, would she have responded like that?" Rosie reasoned, to which Caroline shook her head thoughtfully.

"She barely would have glanced up, she would have just sent somebody to check it out."

"See?" She smirked at the android, who was now staring so intently at a building across the street that it made Caroline a little nervous. "She's just on high alert. I suppose I'd be the same way."

"I'm picking up faint traces of life inside that building across the street." GLaDOS said, without even turning to look at them.

"It's probably just rats or something." Rosie suggested but it was immediately shot down.

"No, the heat signature is much bigger than that." Caroline found herself grabbing hold of the gun in her pocket.

"Coyotes?"

"No," GLaDOS shook her head and finally risked them a glance. "They look human, butâ€¦ something seems wrong. The head seemsâ€¦ enlarged." That was when Caroline looked elsewhere on the street and caught sight of an unnatural black missile-type structure, buried harshly into the cracked tarmac. The rear end of it had ruptured open, and due to the empty interior, she reasoned that \_something \_must have come out of it.

Finally, she drew the gun from its makeshift holster, clicked off the safety and aimed it at the building's decimated window, eyes scanning the shadows for any signs of movement within.

"Hey!" She called, usually firm voice wavering. "Come out here or you're dead!"

"You need to work on your taunts, C." Rosie smirked, but the younger girl only shot her a glare.

Regardless of how bad Caroline's taunts were, they seemed to do the trick. Out of the old building came rushing an alarmingly quick, bloodied and swollen man â€" with something fleshy and round attached to his head.

"What in the name of-!?" Rosie had barely got the words out before GLaDOS pushed them both out of the way, wrenched the gun from Caroline's hand and fired a single shot at the floundering gentleman, sending the fleshy attachment scurrying from his head and causing him to fall flat on his face, dead. The thing that scurried did its best to flee on its tiny legs, lifting two sharp appendages up into the air.

"It looks a bit like a crab." Rosie observed with amusement. The thing looked so pathetic that even GLaDOS found it a little

amusing.

However, then it changed its course, heading back towards them " and leapt with a high-pitched squeal, aiming for GLaDOS' head.

Not expecting the movement, even she was caught unawares. The strange beast latched onto her face with surprising zeal " her only reply was a short-lived squeak.

"Shit!" Rosie came up behind the squirming android with a panicked expression and grabbed hold of the slimy creature, managing to wrench it from GLaDOS' head and toss it away. Despite how dishevelled the poor computer looked, she snarled and clicked the gun, shooting the fleshy crab not once, but three times in all " even though the first shot had been all it needed.

She seemed a bit stunned and her hair was a mess, but the crab hadn't managed to damage her. She was more interested in examining the curious crab before they moved on.

"It appears to be some sort of parasite," She confirmed, examining the tiny teeth which it had attempted to puncture her with. "I could feel it" 'sucking' on my head."

"So it feeds off of the brain of its host. That explains Rob Zombie over there," Rosie nodded to the corpse. "But what \_exactly \_is it? Is it even from this planet?"

GLaDOS used the mini scanner to do a few quick tests, before grunting in annoyance.

"Its DNA matches nothing found on this planet, and my scans show there is a 1% chance of it being an undiscovered Earth creature," She groaned. "I can only realistically assume it's an alien."

"An alien!? Similar to the Combine?" Caroline piped up, kneeling down beside her computer superior, examining the creature which moments ago had been attempting to latch onto GLaDOS' head.

"Perhaps " I couldn't say at this point in time."

"We should keep moving, in case if there's more of those things around." Rosie pointed out. As if it had been staged, there was an inhuman scream down one of the side streets nearby. It chilled Caroline to the core and the three hastily moved on, moving closer to the centre of the city.

The city centre was in such a state that Rosie took a moment to recognize it. Towering, glaring black structures dotted the streets, some lay vandalized while others still stood firm, blocking certain streets from their passing. Thick wires slithered from the alien structures around the pavements, suspended on ebony-coloured poles about the height of your typical lamp post. More cars were abandoned here than anywhere else they had been so far, some even upturned and stuck in sandy ditches where the worn tarmac had somehow been dug through. It looked like a huge pile-up had happened and everybody had just decided to abandon their cars rather than clean it all up. At first, the square they had come to looked to be totally deserted " but as they weaved their way through the maze of cars, they started to spot some very interesting, yet unnerving sights.

There were \_a lot \_of skeletons, most with small circular holes in the back of their skull. Many of them were collapsed over in such a manner that Caroline had to guess they had been running from something when killed. GLaDOS coldly stated that they had all been shot and Caroline's mind flashed to an image â€" she'd always had something of a mental image of the Combine, although she had never seen them before. She could see piercing cyan eyes of a shadowed, suited man â€" in one hand he held very tightly onto a plain black briefcase, and his other hand seemed to be glued to his dark red tie â€" then she realized that that looked nothing like the images of the Combine she usually had. Shaking her head free of the image, she curiously dragged GLaDOS over to one of the skeletons, still clad in the scraps of the clothing it had been wearing on the day of its death. GLaDOS, eyes aflame with interest, pointed to a small indent going across the skeleton's left shoulderblade.

"This human appears to have been physically struck before its death." She traced the bony ridge with her finger, before standing up, disinterested â€" but Caroline lingered there for a moment longer, staring into the hole in the back of the skeleton's head â€" she wondered what thoughts had lay there once â€" were they like hers? Or was this person more serious and mature, like Rosie? Or maybe even a complete asshole, like Eric. She smirked at the thought, gave the skeleton a nod (why, she couldn't be certain) and stood up to join the others.

Luckily, the path Rosie recommended for them appeared to have no alien blockages so they were able to get out of the exposed square before something spotted them â€" and there were certainly \_somethings \_about. In order to preserve the humans' calm states of mind, GLaDOS refrained from telling them that there were actually human-shaped signatures all around her, within the buildings. Judging by their oversized heads, they were the same as that foolish man who had attacked them earlier â€" mindless, with an unnamed alien crab sucking out what little cognitive functions they had possessed in life. Whatever the Combine had done here, GLaDOS concluded, was enough to put anything she could come up with to shame â€" \_for now, \_at least. Maybe they could teach her a few things about human torture. Then, she would kill them. She smirked away to herself â€" she liked the sound of that already.

\* \* \*

><p>Well, there you have it. I'm sorry if this chapter comes across as quite short - it is very small compared to other chapters of this story, but that's in preparation for the next chapter which is going to be where this story REALLY begins, so look forward to it! Thank you for all your patience, I promise you shall be rewarded!  
XD<p>

~Lagiacrux

## 5. Sleepover

Hey there guys, it's been a LONG time - and unfortunately I can't say this is the end of my hiatus either, at least not yet.

Health problems, social issues, issues at home, university work,

driving exams, management of a youtube channel and general bullshit have practically taken most of my writing time away from me - I failed to tell you guys about these issues and some of you got annoyed at me and I got angry in return, and I was quite mean - I'm sorry for that above all. I'm not usually one to display that kind of behavior and it was unfair, despite all I was going through. I wasn't happy for a long time and to be honest I'm not sure if I'm any better just yet. Portal and other things that I enjoy still cheer me up, but I have so little time for these things that it doesn't make a difference for long.

Anyway, I did some searching in my files and I found this - nearly finished. So, I thought I'd do you all a favor and get this out there, because as messed up as my life feels right now, I don't want to see this story die quite yet. I'm sorry for the pathetically huge delay - and I don't even know if people are still reading this - but if you are, hello! :D I missed you all!

And, I'm sorry. I'm sorry for going quiet and being a moody bitch when spoken to and all of these things - and I hope you can still find it somewhere in your heart to enjoy this story, and whatever its future chapters hold.

Sigh, I really did miss GLaDOS.

~ Lagiacrus

\* \* \*

><p>"GET AWAY FROM MY FLAT, YOU FILTHY MONGOLOIDS!"<p>

While on the hunt for useful supplies, Rosie pointed out that the three were passing her block of flats, and requested if she could check her rooms â€" she'd owned a few things that could be of use to her, if they still remained in place. Considering how long she'd been in stasis before the alien invasion, it was more than likely that she was considered dead and her flat had been cleared and resold. Worth a shot, though.

But the stairwell had been swarming with the curious zombie-like creatures, which GLaDOS and Rosie had miraculously managed to bypass by knocking them down the stairs, which killed them. Caroline asked Rosie why she was so calm about the appearance of zombies â€" something which had never existed in her time, of course â€" but she simply smiled and said that she'd once been on a team in Aperture that handled reanimating the dead. Then, she'd went back to tossing a zombie down the stairs wrestler-style.

Conveniently, she still had her key for the flat â€" but was shocked to find it would not enter the lock.

"Hm?! The lock's been changed?"

"Move over a moment." GLaDOS nudged her out of the way, took a step back into a fighting stance and then kicked the door with astonishing force â€" the door's lock came away, rendering the device unable to close.

"We could have used this as shelter, GLaDOS." Rosie scolded, to which the android shrugged.

"Even if we do; no harm will come to us. I doubt those zombies are quite as skilled at climbing the stairs as they are at falling down them and dying."

"True. Right, let's clear this place."

Entering caused the older employee's face to drop.

"Yeah, this isn't my stuff. They must have leased the place out when they thought I was dead," she cast a glare at GLaDOS. "Thanks for that, GLaDOS."

"You're very welcome." The supercomputer retorted with a smirk.

Caroline decided to scout out the master bedroom, which was a large room with a bed, two cupboards and a chest of drawers. They were filled with clothes obviously meant for men, but Caroline picked some things she liked â€" a plain green t-shirt and a pair of heavy cargo pants, perhaps military gear and changed into them â€" they fit her just right, only a little baggy. Either this was a small guy or she was just a very tall woman. She packed some extra stuff for later, before exploring the rest of the room.

She came across a box under the bed â€" opening it up, she found a small collection of items, seemingly belonging to a girl. A photo frame sat upturned near the top of the pile â€" she turned it over, and saw who appeared to be Rosie, standing alongside a rather strapping young man dressed in military attire and a younger double to Rosie, perhaps a relative.

"Hey, Rosie! Some of your stuff's still here!"

The girl came charging through and practically swiped the photo from Caroline's hands. She plopped down on the bed, fingers tracing the frame's dust-tainted surface.

"This is me, my sister and my partnerâ€¦ So I guess he was still living here even after I disappeared. I can't imagine how worried he must have been about meâ€¦ I wonder what happened to him in the end."

"He was in the army? I'm wearing his trousers," Caroline unhelpfully announced, floundering around in the camouflaged gear with an amused smirk.

"Yeah. I suppose he probably got called to help during the alien invasion, no doubt died in the process. I suppose my sister won't be around either."

There was a crash, like the metallic collapsing of numerous utensils.

"The kitchen," Rosie breathed, and Caroline was off like a flash. She darted across the flat, flipped over a couch that was in her way and smashed through the kitchen door. GLaDOS stared back at her, halfway to the floor in order to pick up a dropped pan.

"It fell while I was searching for provisions," She spoke in her

usual emotionless manner. "Also, you should not be performing manoeuvres like that while carrying a little human."

Caroline's only response was to roll her eyes and spit;

"Shut up, GLaDOS."

Darkness was already falling â€" the day had been long although they had only travelled about an hour from the Enrichment Centre. They decided to remain in the flat until morning, just to be safe. Rosie barred the door, and set about trying to make herself at home once more.

"I wonder why he changed the furniture." She wandered aloud â€" Caroline looked up from the packet of long-life pasta she was trying to read, eyes inquisitive.

"Was all the furniture yours?"

"Yeah. He just let me pick most of it â€" said I had a better eye for house arrangement."

"He probably saw you everywhere he looked, or something." Finally Caroline worked out how to prise open the box, her mouth falling slightly agape â€" so much pasta! She glanced back at Rosie to witness her sad smile. Then, she held out her hands.

"Here, let me do that â€" we all know how much you hate cooking."

With some help from GLaDOS, Rosie managed to power up the kitchen long enough to prepare the pasta for her and Caroline. Once that had come to pass, it was pitch black outside â€" Rosie drew the grimy curtains across, casting the room into complete blackness. GLaDOS on the other side of the room moved a cabinet in front of the broken front door â€" the continuous moans from outside were having no such effect on her, but she could detect Caroline's increasing anxiety with each noise she heard â€" and it would do her no good if she was stressed while pregnant. The very thought of such a thing still disgusted her, although she knew it was not exactly something that Caroline had been able to control. Still, all the same, she let out a low growl as she journeyed into the living room and saw Caroline gazing at her stomach, rubbing a hand along it, as though it was already a living being.

"Don't think about it." She scolded the woman, who jumped slightly out of her seat.

"I-I wasn't!" She argued in response, to which GLaDOS simply sighed.

"Caroline, if you're tired, you can take the bed, okay? I'll sleep on the couch, and GLaDOS can keep watch." Rosie's voice echoed from the kitchen, where she had returned to.

"Oh, yes, that's fine, just automatically assume that the scientists gave me a sleep mode for absolutely no reason at all." The supercomputer sneered, yellow eyes glowing in the dark.

"If it bothers you that much, we'll take turns then â€" but Caroline

should definitely sleep. You've been through a lot today." The scientist confirmed her point with a yawn from Caroline.

Still even once all three had retired to their respective stations, Caroline was lying awake â€" she watched GLaDOS' glowing yellow eyes peering out of the window every so often, and on her for the rest of the time. She was more than aware that Caroline wasn't sleeping but simply chose not to comment â€" no such good would come of it, it's not like Caroline would automatically sleep because GLaDOS told her too. The brat was far too disobedient for that.

"Something weird is going on." She mumbled, causing the glowing in GLaDOS' eyes to shift and become brighter for just a moment as they landed on her.

"Really? Was it the walking decaying human bodies that tipped you off or the fact that you're carrying a little human?" The computer asked, completely serious.

"Oh, just drop that already." Caroline's deadpan response, resulting in her turning away from GLaDOS.

"â€|I understand your feelings. I'm unsettled but I am unsure why," the android looked out of the window once more. "I am aware that there is more to this than I currently understand â€" but that won't stop me from finding whoever started this â€" for the sake of Aperture Science." She closed the curtains for a final time.

"I'm worried this is a trap, GLaDOS."

"I have already considered the high probability of it being a trap, you idiot."

"Well, I know, but-!"

"Don't doubt me. I know perfectly well what I'm doing," the computer seemed to hiss at her. "You need to try and rest. I don't need you making a mistake and dying because your pathetic body isn't fully charged."

At that, Caroline sighed.

"Fine, goodnight then."

Surprisingly, she fell asleep very easily after that â€" maybe it was GLaDOS' presence, she couldn't be sure. But it was a sound sleep, in some cases it was even better than sleeping in the Enrichment Centre.

Still, whether she'd slept eight hours or one hour â€" it didn't make things any easier when the morning came.

End  
file.